

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 852

By Harwell

A RESOLUTION to commend Commissioner Julius Johnson for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Julius Johnson is one such estimable person who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson was appointed by Governor Bill Haslam and sworn in as Tennessee's thirty-sixth Commissioner of Agriculture in January 2011; and

WHEREAS, as the Commissioner of Agriculture, Julius Johnson directed the work of more than 800 full-time and part-time employees with responsibilities ranging from farm and agribusiness development, food safety, and pesticide regulation to animal and plant health protection and forest and water resources management; he also rendered sterling service on the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees and Tennessee Board of Regents; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. Johnson proved instrumental in the development of the Governor's Rural Challenge, a ten-year strategic plan to grow Tennessee's agricultural and forest industries; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Johnson encouraged the Department of Agriculture to focus on interagency cooperation and worked with other departments on many issues affecting the agriculture industry, from preparations for a potential outbreak of High Path Avian Influenza to promoting the Governor's education initiatives and economic development in rural communities; and

WHEREAS, prior to his appointment, Commissioner Johnson served as Chief Administrative Officer of the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation (TFBF), a leading farm and rural advocacy organization with the largest membership in the nation; and

WHEREAS, during his thirty-seven years of professional service to the TFBF, fifteen of which he served as the Chief Administrative Officer, he directed the organization's legislative affairs and served as director of research and as a regional field service director; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Johnson possesses a wealth of experience in working with government leaders and agencies at the local, state, and federal levels; he has served on the Legislative Tax Structure Study Committee, the Governor's Council on Agriculture and Forestry, the Governor's Interagency Task Force on Wetlands, and other agricultural committees primarily related to issues affecting rural Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in the civic realm, Commissioner Johnson has served on the University of Tennessee Agriculture Development Board, the Maury County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, the Maury County United Way Board of Directors, and the Maury County Vision 2020 Board of Directors; he was a Kiwanian and the president of the Maury County University of Tennessee Alumni Board and the Middle Tennessee Council of Boy Scouts; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Johnson has been recognized by the Tennessee Association of FFA with the Honorary State FFA Degree and by the University of Tennessee Gamma Sigma Delta Honorary Society with the Distinguished Achievement in Agriculture Award; he is an honorary brother of the Alpha Kappa Chapter of the Alpha Gamma Rho agricultural fraternity; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson's remarkable success as a public servant and civic leader is directly attributable to his reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense and his uncommon ability to work well with people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Commissioner Johnson is fortunate to share both love and companionship with his wife, Karen; his children and their spouses, Matthew and Kristi Johnson and Mary Ella and Sam Lettiere; and his grandchildren, Liam, Lucy, and Andi; and

WHEREAS, Julius Johnson is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the Volunteer State, and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby commend Julius Johnson for his honorable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee and salute his unswerving commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.